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By: Kalei Rupp

Alaska Air Guardsmen save two injured hikers near Whittier

CAMP DENALI, Alaska – Alaska Air National Guardsmen saved two teenage boys who had fallen on a mountainside near Whittier overnight Saturday.

According to the 11th Air Force Rescue Coordination Center (RCC), the two 16-year-old hikers had reportedly fallen and sustained injuries while climbing a mountain in the Whittier area. One of the boys was able to contact his father, who subsequently contacted Whittier Police. Alaska State Troopers were then contacted and reached out to the RCC shortly after 11 p.m. Saturday for assistance in the rescue.

"The hikers were stranded and unable to get down," said Tech. Sgt. Jeff Schaezlein, of the RCC. "Because of the steep terrain, the Alaska State Troopers requested a hoist-capable helicopter."

At 1:30 a.m. Sunday morning, a HH-60 Pavehawk helicopter from the Alaska Air National Guard's 210th Rescue Squadron with three Guardian Angels from the 212th Rescue Squadron on board left Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. Shortly after 2 a.m. the Guardian Angel team was reported on scene with the two hikers.

The hikers were brought on board the helicopter and taken to an Anchorage hospital for medical treatment.

The RCC awarded the 210th and 212th Rescue Squadrons two saves for this mission.

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